

OUR NEIGHBORS OF THE FOREST

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OUR NEIGHBORS
OF
THE FORESTS

STORIES FOR CHILDREN

BY
ALICE E. ALLEN)
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EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING COMPANY
BOSTON
NEW YORK CHICAGO SAN FRANCISCO

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FAWN

OUR NEIGHBORS OF THE FORESTS

FAWNS

In the great, green woods, where wild animals live, we find deer with big, beautiful horns.

These horns grow very large. They spread out something like the branches of a tree. Do you know why Mother Nature has given deer these horns? Every animal has some means of protection, and deer have horns so that they can protect themselves.

Deer have many enemies. When they

are attacked by other animals they strike out with their horns, which can wound severely. But a deer's worst enemy is man. Every year the harmless animals are hunted for their meat, soft skins, and fearless heads with their beautiful branching horns.

Horns are strong and cruel. But they are not protection against men with guns. So deer have other ways of taking care of themselves which make them hard to capture.

Their keen noses know every scent of the forest and can tell danger far off. Their great brown eyes, too, are always on the watch. Their sensitive ears twitch nervously at every sound, and when danger is near a deer's safest plan is to run.

A deer has wonderful feet, swift and tireless. When he runs and leaps, down

these feet come safe and sound each time in the centre of narrow path or dangerous ledge, pause for an instant, and then bound away again.

The mother deer has no horns to protect herself and her little ones. Sometimes the male deer goes about with her. But much of the time she must look after herself.

She has such a strange, pretty way of taking care of her little ones before they are old enough to take care of themselves. She is a dull, tawny color from pointed nose to tip of tail; but the underside of body and tail are white as snow.

When she scents danger she gives a long, loud cry of warning to her babies, turns, lifts high her tail so that its white lining shows at a distance, and is off and away. That tail stands

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up white against the darkness of the forest like a little light, and shows the young deer the way. Well they know the meaning of that lifted tail. "Danger! quick! follow me!" it says.

A young deer is called a fawn. Maybe, if we lived in the woods for awhile and were always very quiet and careful, we might find some baby fawns hidden away somewhere all alone.

They are pretty little things. They have soft, warm, gold-brown fur all dappled over with great glints of pale yellow and white. When she made their coats, Mother Nature looked carefully to the safety of these gentle little creatures. For when they curl up under an old log, or hide in the shade of a tree, their pretty coats are so much like moss and leaves with sun and shadow dancing across them, that

the little animals can scarcely be seen.

Look at the fawn in the picture. What a beautiful little fellow he is! His pretty head is half lifted to listen. His long, velvety ears stand up straight and are all a-quiver. His trusting face and glorious eyes seem to say, "I'm such a little fawn, please don't hurt me."

Young fawns are said to be very tame. A man who loves all animals, once found two baby fawns alone in a little hollow. Their mother had hidden them there while she went to find something to eat.

The baby fawns were almost as tame as kittens. They looked up at the man trustingly with gentle brown eyes. He rubbed their soft heads. They nestled close to him and licked his hands. They would not go away from

him even when their mother called them. So he had to put them back in their little nest and leave them.

They were still too small to know that deer must be afraid of men. They had not yet learned the scent of a human being which to a deer means gun! click! bang! all sorts of danger ahead.

STORY ABOUT A FAWN

Once a little boy lost himself in the forest. There were many people to watch him — Father, Mother, Auntie, Uncle Ben, Cousin Nell, and Nurse, to say nothing of Sambo, the big dog, but still he wandered away.

He was walking along the trail when suddenly — there wasn't any trail. The trees were all in a tangle. The camp was gone. It was almost dark. And

there he was, poor little frightened Ted, all alone in the big, big forest.

He called and cried. A great owl came out and called back, "Whoo-o! Whoo-o!" And the woods, which had been just the loveliest place in the world, were all full of queer, creepy noises. As it grew dark, it grew cold, too. Ted walked a long way and didn't get anywhere. And when the stars came out, tired, hungry, and oh, so homesick! he crept into the shelter of an old broken down camp. There he curled up and went to sleep.

If Ted had only known — someone else was lost in the great wood, too — a little shiny, golden gray fawn. He and his mother and sister had been browsing away contentedly, when faint and far off there had come to their quick ears a low rustle — rustle — rustle.

His mother lifted her beautiful head, her ears like trumpets, and sniffed suspiciously. She gave a cry to her little ones which meant, "Look out! Come!" she was off, her white tail lifted like a flag. His sister then followed at once, directly behind her mother. Her white tail was lifted, too. Away, away, away, went the two. With splendid strides, the mother leaped across logs and over gullies and bounded on. She was as swift and graceful and fearless as a bird. The young fawn was awkward yet. She had not learned how to jump and come down on all four little feet at once. But she followed her mother, leaping as nearly as she could in her tracks.

All at once she lost sight of the white tails. A thicket of woods hid them from sight. The little fawn

stopped, slipped into a shadow and waited. He was so much the color of the shadow that no one could see him. Mother called first one side and then another, but he was such a little fawn he didn't know how to go to her.

Then bang! bang! bang! A hard round something buzzed by him. It just missed his head. It frightened him dreadfully.

He looked and looked. He ran this way and that. There was no white tail. No little sister. No mother. No anything but woods and stars like big eyes looking down at him. And somewhere in the woods there were big hungry bears.

He shivered with cold. By and by, as he ran along, he came to an old camp in a cleared spot. It was warmer in its shelter. So, the little lost fawn lay

down and curled up like a kitten. He was very close to another little curled-up heap — Ted himself — but he did not know it.

For awhile they slept close together, the little lost boy and the little lost fawn. And before long — quite suddenly — the fawn awoke. There, coming toward him, was a big bright something which dazzled him and yet fascinated him. He crept toward it. Oh, how it glowed! — a ball of fire in the darkness. The little fawn, his eyes full of wonder and fear, crept closer and closer. Then something warned him. There was a spring, a rustle, a flash of gold and white, and *the fawn was gone!*

The bright light which the fawn had seen was a torch. It was carried by Ted's father. Uncle Ben was just be-

hind. The crackling and rustling woke Ted. He saw the light. Then he saw his father. He screamed with joy.

Father lifted his little boy into his strong arms. Close to the hollow, in the pine needles where Ted had slept, both saw another little hollow. It was still quite warm. That was where the fawn had slept.



Gray Squirrel

SQUIRRELS

THE RED SQUIRREL

Out in the woods one day, after butternuts, Bobby heard a strange noise. It wasn't the "Whit kwit?" of a partridge. It wasn't the cheery "Chuck, chuck, chuck," of a chipmunk, sitting in the sunshine outside his den. It was a kind of drumming on wood. And with the rat-a-tat-tat, rat-a-tat-tat, was a scurrying of feet and a series of squeals and screams, like nothing so much as a squirrel. Bobby listened. The rat-a-tatting and squealing and squirming kept up.

It was a squirrel — or two squirrels.

Bobby could hear two voices. One was shrill. The other was deep and



Red Squirrel

hoarse. And they mixed together in the queerest way.

At last Bobby found the tree where the racket was going on. It was a

tall oak tree. There, on a low horizontal limb, sat a saucy red squirrel. He wriggled and giggled and screamed with laughter. And all the time, he beat out the jolliest little jig on the branch.

But where was the other squirrel? Bobby could still hear the two voices. But he could see only one squirrel. At last, Bobby found out something that made him open his eyes wide. That queer little squirrel up there owned both voices himself.

The red squirrel is as much a part of October as the dropping nuts and red and yellow leaves. His gay little chatter belongs to autumn woods quite as much as the bobolink's song does to June meadows.

Invade some butternut or hickory grove on a frosty October morning, and hear the red

squirrel beat the "juba" on a horizontal branch. It is a most lively jig, what the boys call "regular breakdown," interspersed with squeals and snickers and derisive laughter. The most noticeable peculiarity about the vocal part is the fact that it is a kind of duet. In other words, by some ventriloquial tricks, he appears to accompany himself as if his voice split up, a part forming a low guttural sound, and a part a shrill nasal sound. — *John Burroughs.*

Do you see the little red squirrel in the picture? He fairly bubbles over with fun. He is as full of his pranks as a hand organ is of tunes. His home is the great green wood. The fences and stone walls are his railroads. On them he travels to orchards where apples are ripe. Or, sometimes, when times are hard, he ventures to some barn and helps himself to the farmer's grain.

Many times on his journey he stops

for lunch. He sits up straight. His long bushy tail fits into the pretty curve of his back. Between his paws he holds a ripe hickory nut. He turns it from side to side. He crunches into it with his sharp white teeth. He munches daintily. All the time his big, bright eyes watch, his keen ears listen. He is one quiver of excitement from the tips of his ears to the end of his tail. A sound — he is off and away, a streak of rusty red against the gray of the fence rail.

If he finds that he need not have been frightened, he stops again. He pulls himself together with many a quick jerk and turn, and goes on with his meal. He cocks his pretty head, now on one side, now on the other. If he sees you peering at him, he looks you all over. When he finds you will

not harm him, he screams, and laughs, and chatters. He is so saucy you are quite sure he says, "Oh, what a silly thing to be a little boy! It's so much more fun to be a squirrel."

He is such a happy-go-lucky sort of fellow that he doesn't bother much to lay up food for the winter. Sometimes, he sticks a few extra nuts here and there in the forked branches of trees, or hides them away in saplings in case he should need them. This isn't such a poor plan in some ways, either. For with his food scattered about, the red squirrel can go away from home, quite sure that no thief will find all his stores. He is more or less active all winter.

When the freezing days come, the little red squirrel knows some very hungry minutes. But he scurries away over the snow, sure that he will find

something. Perhaps there are a few frozen apples left in the orchard. The seeds of these will do for breakfast. Sometimes he dines scantily on sumach buds, or the seeds he finds hidden away in hemlock cones.

THE CHIPMUNK

There is another squirrel called the chipmunk. He is lighter in color than the red squirrel. His tail is shorter and smaller. He has long, narrow, black stripes on each side of his body.

If you could examine his mouth, you would see a tiny flap of skin on the inside of each cheek. These open inside and make real little pockets. Cheek pockets are handy things to have, the chipmunk finds. He doesn't need to carry his food in his teeth, as other squirrels do.

He lives in a hole which he digs in the ground. It would seem that the little fellow would leave the loose soil



Chipmunk

which he digs out somewhere near by. But usually there isn't a trace of it to be seen when the snug little nest is finished. Only the little builder him-

self knows where the door is. Perhaps he carries away the loose earth in his cheek pockets.

He likes a maple leaf quite as well as anything. He picks out a good sized one, and tucks it with both hands into those handy little pockets of his. Then away he goes by the most round-about paths to his home.

Close to his home he stores a tidy pile of nuts — enough to last him all winter. In December he goes into his den. There he stays, warm and cozy, all winter long. He always lives by himself. He never comes out of his nest until March. Then he is up and stirring. Who could sleep under the ground when woodpeckers drum and frogs chirp that spring has come?

March is mating time for chipmunks. In May, four or five babies are born

to the proud little parents. And busy times begin. The babies must be fed and cared for. So the scamper and scramble for food begins. And all the time one must watch out for sounds and scents that mean "A dog is coming!" "There is a boy with a gun! Run! Run!"

Busy as they are, chipmunks have plenty of time for play. Did you ever see two or three of them having a game of tag? Round and round they scamper, first one ahead, then another. And they chatter and scream, and seem to have as good a time as school children out at recess.

THE GRAY SQUIRREL

Is much larger than the red one. He is an elegant little fellow. On the upper parts of his body his fur is gray.

The under parts are white, and there are yellowish-brown dashes of color on his back and sides.

His ears are high, narrow, and pointed. He has a magnificent bushy tail of which he is very proud. It is more than an ornament. When he takes a leap from some tall tree, his great tail is arched and helps break his fall. And when he goes to sleep, he wraps it about him, like a warm, furry blanket.

A story is told of a gray squirrel who once lost part of his tail. He was heart-broken. He went away and hid, and nothing could coax him from his hiding place.

The gray squirrel lives in the trunk of some old tree. It has an entrance far up in the branches. When spring comes, the little fellow seems to feel

the need of a summer home. So he selects a pleasant location — usually in a tree near to his old home.

Here he builds a pretty cottage of small, leafy twigs. To this home he brings his mate. And here the baby squirrels are born and brought up. The old home is not forgotten. The squirrels often visit it. And when they are in danger, it is to this home that they run for safety.

Gray squirrels are easily tamed. In some cities they play about the paths of public parks and along the roadsides. They seem quite as much at home as the children who pet and feed them. In these cities, laws are made to keep people from killing or harming the tame squirrels.

A little girl who lives in New York City told me about the squirrels in

Central Park. When she goes to the park she always carries a bag of peanuts for them. She sits down on the walk and they come all about her for the nuts. Some of them always come and eat out of her hands. Others wait until they think she is not looking, run up, grab a nut, run away, and eat it at a safe distance. And some of them will never come near her, no matter how long she coaxes them. For these timid ones she always leaves some nuts nicely shelled.

THE FLYING SQUIRREL

There is one squirrel who is up and doing only at night.

All day he is rolled up in a furry ball. But at night — how he flies about, building his house or storing up nuts.

This is the flying squirrel. He is

unlike other squirrels. He has a fold of skin between each fore and hind leg.

These folds are strong and elastic. They are partly held up by the bony part of the feet. When the squirrel leaps, these folds spread out, something like wings, and break his fall.

Although this squirrel is called a flying squirrel, his way of getting through the air is not like a bird's. He cannot fly upward. His flight is only a long-drawn-out descent. He drops quickly in a slanting direction. His legs are held straight and stiff from his body. His body itself is made broad and flat. His tail acts something like a rudder.

A STORY

Mabel's birthday was on the thirty-first day of October. Her mother said

she might have a party and invite all the little girls in the village. And because it was All Hallow E'en, the children were to bob for apples and roast chestnuts. Best of all, they were to sit around the fire and see who could tell the best story.

Elsie was Mabel's chum. She lived near the woods and was to furnish the chestnuts. She gathered them in a big basket. Then she picked out the plumpest ones and spread them on the attic floor to dry.

One day she went to look at her pile of nuts. She was sure some were gone. She counted those that were left. The next day she counted again. There were just six nuts missing.

Mother said Elsie had not counted right. No one but Elsie had been in

the attic. And a rat would not carry off the nuts whole.

But the next day five more nuts were gone. And the next day, six more. And every day they disappeared.

Elsie slept in a room under the attic. On the morning of Mabel's birthday, she heard a strang sound outside the window, in the big maple tree.

There sat a saucy red squirrel with big round eyes. He rocked fearlessly on a high branch. In his paws was a ripe chestnut. It was so good. He nodded his head and snickered about it to himself while he nibbled.

When he had finished the nut, he glanced all about. He didn't see the little girl in the window. So he frisked away up the tree toward the attic window. The window was closed and fastened. Elsie waited and listened.

She heard little feet scurry up the roof of the house. In a minute they came nearer. They were on the floor of the attic over her head!

How did the squirrel find his way in? Down the chimney? Elsie never knew.

But in another minute there was a rattle of nuts, a scamper, a rush and a rustle, and then, there sat the tiny thief on the maple bough, eating another of her nuts, shaking and chuckling with mirth.

It was only a small basket of nuts that Elsie carried to the party. She didn't say anything about the red-brown squirrel, who had eaten more than his share without roasting them, until the time came for the stories. Then she told all about him just the best she could. And she did so well that she won the first prize.

And what do you suppose it was?
A beautiful gray squirrel in a big cage
with a wheel.

BEAVERS

You wouldn't think, from his picture, that a beaver knew much. He has a queer, squat-looking body, and a head that seems flattened lengthwise. His small eyes are set on the slant and wide apart. When he walks, he is awkward enough. His forelegs are much shorter than his hind ones, and all of them seem too short for his body. He wriggles along, stepping on the soles of his webbed hind feet, but using only the toes of his fore feet. His tail seems in the way, too, as it drags along behind. But when he plunges into the water, away he swims as easily as can be. Webbed hind feet, he finds, are just the things to have



BEAVER

when one wants to swim. And as for his clumsy tail, he couldn't get on without that. It makes such a fine rudder. By turning it this way and that, he steers himself wherever he wants to go.

Queer as he is, the beaver is a bright little creature. He not only cuts down trees; he builds dams and lays out villages.

Long ago, beaver villages were found on many of our forest lakes and streams. Then men came. They cut down trees. They ploughed the land and built barns and houses. The beaver soon found that he wasn't safe. His warm brown skin, which was so comfortable to wear, made him trouble. For, once off his body, it sold to the fur companies for a large sum of money.

So the beavers took their families

and went away into the woods. Soon they were again in danger. For more trees were cut down, and more farms and villages were laid out. Farther and farther the little creatures went, keeping away from civilization just as much as possible. Now, with great farms, towns, cities, and railroads everywhere, the little brown beaver is seldom found in our woods. He has gone to the great forest of the north. There he still builds dams and houses, using always the same old patterns.

During the summer, beavers live in some quiet stream or pond. They sleep in snug burrows in the bank. They eat the tender plants which grow in the water. Sometimes they go into the woods berrying. Best of all, they like bark — there is nothing quite so delicious, you would know if you were a

beaver, as the bark of poplar and willow trees.

Several families live together in a kind of tribe. One of the oldest and wisest male beavers is the chief. In each family, beside the father and mother, there are a half-dozen or so little beavers. The little beavers weigh about ten pounds, and the fully-grown beavers, sometimes as much as fifty pounds.

When the days grow short and the nights crisp and cold, some morning the beavers see a silver fringe of ice on the faded ferns at the edge of the water. Soon the stream will be a mass of glistening ice. It is high time to think about building winter homes.

First, they must look up just the best place to lay out their village. This is often a stream rather than a

lake. It is said that the beavers choose running water so that everything about their homes will be kept fresh and clean. If they can find a stream so deep that it will not freeze from top to bottom, even in the coldest weather, they set at work at once to build their houses.

But often the handiest stream is quite shallow. Then it is that the beavers show what clever, patient little creatures they are. For with great skill and quickness they build a dam to deepen the water in the stream. All summer they have cut down trees just for this purpose.

CUTTING DOWN TREES

How can so small an animal cut down trees? He sits up on his queer hind feet, puts both fore feet around

the trunk — often six or eight inches across — and then uses his teeth. They are wonderful teeth, sharp and hard. And the more they are used, the sharper and harder they grow.

Crunch, crunch, crunch, go the little teeth in a circle around the trunk. Crunch, crunch, crunch, round and round and round. The chips fly, the gash grows deeper and deeper, until the centre of the trunk is reached and the tree topples and falls. After the beavers have cut down enough trees for their dam, the place looks as if it had been cleared by wood-choppers.

BUILDING DAMS

With their teeth the beavers drag the trees to the edge of the stream and push them into the water. The current floats them along. When the trees



A BEAVER'S DAM

reach the place where the dam is to be built, the beavers place them across the stream. Sometimes, there are roots at the bottom of the stream which help to hold the trees in place. And the beavers bring everything they can find to fill in gaps and crevices — branches, stones, sticks, and mud. The mud they bring from the bed of the stream. They hold it in little balls under the chin with one fore paw.

Near the centre of the dam the beavers leave a little low place where, when the stream above the dam becomes deep enough, the water runs over. Often, the whole dam is built in one night. It is so close and firm that not a drop of water can get through. It is said that men learned to build their dams from the beavers. You can understand, now that you see

how hard beavers work, what people mean when they say they “have worked like beavers.”

BUILDING HOUSES

After the dam is finished, the beavers build their houses. They bring logs, branches, sticks and stones. These they lay in a circle on the bed of the stream above the dam. Around this foundation they dig a trench. The water may sometimes freeze to the bottom of the stream but never to the bottom of the trench.

A large family makes a house for itself. Sometimes, several small families live together in one house. In this case, partitions are put in so that each family has its own rooms.

Each house has two stories. The room in the lower story — below the

water — is large enough for the whole family and the winter stores of sticks and bark. Here, too, is the door. Through this door, the beavers come and go without showing so much as an ear above the water. In the upper story is another room, high and dry, above the water, where the beavers sleep. The walls of the house are very thick. The roofs are prettily rounded, and show like mounds above the water or ice of the stream. Perhaps the early Eskimos used beaver houses for models for their own homes. Anyway, they look very much like them.

When they are quite sure that a heavy frost is coming to freeze up everything, the beavers plaster the outside of their homes entirely with mud. After the mud is frozen solid, it is so

hard that not even a beaver's sharp teeth can make a hole in it.

All winter long, the little brown beavers hide themselves in these cozy lake houses. They have burrows in the banks of the stream, where they often go. This is great fun, no doubt, but it is not safe. Hunters are on the watch and often catch them in their burrows.

When spring melts the ice of the stream, the beavers leave their village. They go to their summer pond — cool and quiet under the trees. When fall comes, they will go back to their little lake village, make what repairs are necessary in cottages and dams, and go into winter quarters.

HARRY'S PET BEAVER

One day, Harry went for a walk in the woods. It was a very cold day

and there was snow everywhere, but Harry didn't mind that.

When he came to the beaver stream, he must stop just to see what was going on. It had been a busy place in the fall, but to-day it was very quiet. Only the roofs of the queer little homes showed above the ice. All the beavers, of course, were inside sound asleep. Harry did wish he could catch them awake and at work just once.

Just then, Harry heard stealthy footsteps. Farther up the stream he saw two hunters step out on the ice. They were after beaver skins.

Straight to one of the largest beaver homes they went. Harry wished he could let the beavers know that they were in danger. But he could only creep to the edge of the ice and watch.

One of the trappers made a hole in

the ice. It was between the beavers' house and the bank where their burrows were. This man stood by the hole and watched the dark water. The other man went to the house and rapped sharply with his stick on the roof two or three times.

In a minute, Harry saw the trapper near the hole in the ice stoop down, and strike at something in the water. Harry could wait no longer. He ran across the ice. One trapper held a fine large beaver, already dead. The other had a strong young one in his arms.

"They'll bring a good price," said the first man, as Harry came up.

"What'll we do with the young 'un?" asked the other. The poor little beaver trembled in the man's arms. He looked at Harry with frightened eyes.

“Let me have him, please,” said Harry, quickly. “I’ll give you fifty cents for him.”

The men laughed and talked together. Then they took Harry’s half dollar and he took the beaver. Mother was surprised when she saw Harry’s new pet. Father found a big cage. When the beaver was once inside and nibbling a stick, he seemed quite at home.

Harry named him Brownie. The little beaver became quite tame; but sometimes he looked so sad, that Harry feared he missed his little round-roofed cottage in the stream. But usually he was very happy and nibbled his twigs quite as eagerly as if he had been as busy as the busiest beaver who was ever chief of a thriving lake-village.

Another story is told of a beaver

that was captured when he was very young, and who lived in a family as free and contentedly as the cat or dog. They often wondered if he would ever show any signs of building houses or dams, if he ever saw anything of the kind. One day the mother in the family put a pail of water on the floor. It began to leak. The beaver saw the water slowly running away. He rushed out and began to gather chips, sticks, and anything he could find and tried to make a dam around the pail to stop the water. You see, he had the instinct of the beavers, even if he had never seen a dam built before he was stolen away from home.

BEARS

Away up in the woods of Maine and Canada lives a black bear. He is a great glossy fellow. He has sharp white teeth and sharp black claws. The Indians call him Mooween. If you could know Mooween, as he lives alone by himself in the great woods, you would know a bear at his very best.

Perhaps because he doesn't care to see you, a bear is given weak, near-sighted eyes. His keen nose and sharp ears tell him all about your comings and goings.

Should you meet a bear out for a walk in his own woods, you probably won't have much time to study him.



BEARS

It is said that he always has several plans of getting away from you inside his head. Just what he will decide to do depends much upon what you do yourself. He sizes you up. If you are frightened, he puts on a bold face and stands his ground. If you meet his gaze with no signs of fear, he usually walks quietly away. Shout at him. Flourish your stick. In a minute he will turn and rush away. Where there was a bear there will be only a flying set of feet and a shower of chips and stones.

So you see, in spite of his name, which suggests dreadful things, in spite of his cruel claws and terrible teeth, which could tear you to shreds, in spite of his great strong arms, which could crush you to death, an ordinary bear is really a timid fellow. He likes

the peace and quiet of the woods. All he asks of you is to leave him alone.

CUBS

Bear cubs look like great clumsy black kittens. They are brimful of fun and frolic. They watch every movement of their big mother and mimic her in the drollest way. Sometimes they play real monkey-tricks on her. If she is good-natured, she licks them with her tongue and seems to like the fun. Sometimes she feels cross. Then she cuffs her children with her great paws.

Cubs, sometimes, stand up on their hind legs and box. They strike big blows at each other with their pudgy paws. They have wrestling matches. When one goes down, the other fellow stands over him. He takes him by

the throat, growls, and pretends to be very fierce.

It is said that cubs sometimes play a game something like hide-and-seek with their mother. While she is away from home, they run away and hide. When she comes back, she may coax and she may scold. Those naughty cubs will not come to her. She must go and hunt them up.

The mother bear takes great care of her little black babies. She teaches them all about the scents and sounds of the woods — and just what ones mean danger. When they are still very young, she takes them between her teeth, carries them to a brook or pond, and gives them a thorough bath. The water is cold. The cubs kick and struggle and splutter. Little the mother cares. She dips them and souses them.

Then she puts them in the sun to dry.

Often she has help in taking care of her babies. A bear joins the family. He is larger than a cub, but not fully grown. He is the older brother of the cubs. Last year he was only a cub himself.

He helps teach the cubs to run swiftly, to swim, and to climb. He isn't always as patient as the mother bear. Big brothers aren't often. If he gets cross with the little ones, or teases them, the mother bear boxes his ears just as she did when he was a cub.

FOOD

During the summer and fall, bears tramp, tramp, tramp, about the woods. They eat until they can eat no more.

Then they sleep. When they wake up, they begin to tramp and eat again.

They eat whatever the woods offer — roots, plants, leaves, nuts, and berries. Sometimes they visit nearby gardens and help themselves to ripe vegetables. They even dig up and eat the farmer's potatoes.

When plant food is scarce, they kill and eat other animals — wood-mice, rabbits, caribous — anything they can lay their great paws on.

Bruin is a fine fisherman. He sits on the shore of a shallow stream and waits, silent and wary. A quick flash — a gleam of gold-red in the water. Out flies Bruin's paw. The next instant the fish lies on the shore.

A bear likes all manner of sweet things. Best of all, perhaps, he enjoys the honey he steals away from the bees.

And he likes something else as sour as honey is sweet. He comes to an old rotten log. He sniffs the air like a hungry school-boy. He lays the log open. From one end to the other he runs his great greedy tongue. Nothing is nicer for him than plenty of red ants.

IN THE BERRY BUSHES

Bears like berries of all kinds. Once a big bear took her family black-berrying. It was hard picking. The berries were scarce and briers were thick. At last, in a cleared space, the bears came upon a tin pail full to the brim of luscious, purple-black berries. They dragged the pail away into the bushes. What a picnic they then had! They were eating the last of their feast when there came a sound which made the mother bear throw up her head,

sniff the air, and give a low cry of danger. One cub wanted to see what was the matter. He poked his black head out of the bushes. But he drew it back again and ran for his life.

What he had seen was a number of hunters and guides. Some of them were dragging a dead bear. Two were leading a cub.

The men didn't stop long to look for their lost pail of blackberries. What were a few quarts of berries to a beautiful black bearskin? It had been great sport, too, they thought, killing a real live bear. It would be something to tell their friends in the city.

It seems cruel, doesn't it, that a man, who really doesn't need a bearskin or bear meat or any part of a bear, should spend his time in shooting bears just for fun?

And the cub — poor little fellow. He looked at the green woods as he went along. He filled his nostrils full of the scents he loved so. He seemed to know that he would never come back. If he had known all about the life he would have to lead, I think he would rather have been dead like the other bear. He would be sold. He would be tamed and trained.

He would have to walk miles along dusty roads. Then on street corners, tired and homesick, he would be made to carry a musket and march. He would be made to go round and round in a circle, taking great clumsy steps in time to a tune which his keeper would sing — cracking his whip meanwhile. If he didn't do it all as well as he could, he would be whipped and kicked. Never more could he live the

big, free, out-of-door life he was made to live — poor little lonely Bruin!

WHEN A BEAR IS ATTACKED OR WOUNDED

he becomes savage. He fights for his life with great keenness and cunning. When her little ones are in danger the mother bear is roused to a fierce frenzy. She will do anything, that a bear can do, to save their lives.

HIBERNATION

When the days grow short and cold, bears begin to think of winter. They are sleek and fat. Their fur is warm and thick. They are not afraid of snow and storm and cold. But they know that for months the woods will furnish them no food. So they look

up hollow logs or caves, crawl inside, curl up, and go to sleep, to sleep all through the long winter. This long winter nap of theirs is called hibernation.

During their hibernation, bears suck their paws. They don't do this to keep from starving, as some people think. They need no food at this time. But all summer long, up hill and down, over stones and brambles, through wet places and dry places, those faithful feet have carried their heavy bodies. The outside skin is old and dry and cracked and worn out. The bears help it to come off by sucking it. By spring a fine new skin will have grown in its place.

A bear's breath is so hot that it often melts a place in the snow around the open end of the log. In the first warm

days of spring, the bears wake, and crawl out into the sunshine. With the mother bear come two new little cubs. They were born to her in the old log during the winter.

A STORY

One night — a crisp, cold night, all stars and snow — Joe and his bit of a sister, Bess, made maple taffy.

It was the kind which must be stirred and stirred until it thickens into a golden, creamy mass. Then it must be cut into crisp toothsome squares, which melt away in sweetness in your mouth.

Well, the sirup had boiled and boiled.

The old black kettle with the crack in it had held together.

Bess couldn't wait another minute for the candy to be done. So Joe

took the kettle from the fire and began to stir. The kitchen was too hot. Joe put Bess in her high chair at the window. Then he went outside to finish his candy making. All went well until Bess leaned too far forward, because she must see how the candy was getting on. The chair leaned, too. Bess fell out with a scream. The chair fell on top of her with a crash. Mother came. Joe set down the kettle and came, too. He picked up the chair. He brought the witch hazel bottle and some brown paper and hot water, and ever so many things. It was half an hour before Bess stopped crying and wanted some candy.

Joe ran out of doors. The candy was gone — kettle and all. There was nothing left to tell that there had ever been any candy save the big circle in

the snow where the kettle had stood and — *some large tracks*.

Joe knelt down. He looked carefully at the tracks. Had Jerry stolen up and played a trick on him? There was the print of a sole and five toes. But they were much too large for Jerry's feet. Besides, would Jerry go barefoot on such a night? And besides — Joe looked more closely — did a boy's feet have sharp claws on each toe? It couldn't be Jerry. And there were only two homes, Joe's and Jerry's, on the mountain side.

If you have ever made a kettle full of candy, thinking as each bubble burst, how good it was going to be, you can think just how anxious Joe was to find the thief and get back the stolen sweets. Mother was busy with Bess. The big, bright face of the moon was just looking

down over the mountain. It was light as day. Joe set out to follow those queer looking tracks.

He trudged sturdily along. Suddenly a low grunt, or growl, or both in one, brought him to a quick halt. Across the road was the thief — a large half-grown brown bear. But what was the matter with him? Joe quite forgot to be afraid in his wonder at the strange sight. For on that bear's head — fitted snugly like a round cap, and held fast by the hardened mass of candy inside — was the big black kettle. The bear had stuck his inquisitive nose into the kettle to see what the delicious smelling stuff might be. The kettle had gone onto his head. And there it had stayed and still stayed and meant to stay in spite of the bear's frantic efforts to free himself. This way and that he lunged

and plunged. He threw his head and shook it wildly. He clutched at the air with his great paws. Still the kettle stuck fast. Its handle hung down behind.

At a safe distance Joe watched the bear's antics. He doubled up with laughter. The tears streamed down his cheeks. If only Jerry was there! Suddenly, a sharp crack! crack! rang out. The bear had given a mighty leap. He had struck the kettle against a great rock at the side of the road. It snapped and fell to the ground. Part of the candy went with it. More clung in sweet sticky strings and crisp chunks to the bear's brown head. But he was free.

Joe didn't wait to see what the bear's next move might be. He didn't even wait to finish his laugh. For, even a

boy — if he had walked about with a kettle of candy on his head — might become cross. Joe thought best to let him get good-natured by himself. He ran home about as fast as two sturdy legs would take him.

Next morning he and Jerry went to the great rock. There, in the midst of big bear tracks, lay the two pieces of the kettle. And inside and outside it was scraped, licked, scoured — there was not one crumb of the candy left anywhere!

FOXES

After a storm, among the tracks of grouse and squirrels and rabbits, are some other tracks showing clear and sharp against the snow. They are so wild, so free, and show such nimble feet, they can belong only to a fox. They tell plainly about his wanderings since the storm. Here he went slowly. Perhaps he was planning where to get a good breakfast.

KINDS OF FOXES

The Silver or Black Fox is an elegant creature. He is black, with long silky hairs, many of them delicately ringed with silver gray. His tail is tipped with white.



FOXES

The Gray Fox is dull gray, touched here and there with black. His tail is gray-white on the sides, rusty below, and black at the tip.

The Common Red Fox is best known to us. He is tawny red with yellow gleams in his fur to match the yellow gleams in his eyes. The under side of his body and the lower parts of his back are grizzly gray. Along the under side of his body runs a narrow line of white. His throat is white. The backs of his stiff, straight ears, his keen, pointed nose, his slender legs, and the tips of the hair on his tail are black and glossy.

This tail is the pride of his life. It is of a warm golden-red color — light and feathery. When he runs, it seems to float above him — a yellow torch shining against the whiteness of

the snow. But in wet weather, when he has run far and fast, his tail sometimes becomes damp, bedraggled and heavy as a mop. At last, he can carry it no more. So he takes refuge in his den. There he stays until it becomes dry and light again.

DENS

In the spring, a fox goes out house-hunting. Sometimes he selects a good place, burrows deep into the earth, and makes his own den. But he would much prefer — the wily fox — to take possession of a burrow already made — a rabbit's, maybe. That the rabbit has made her home herself and is living there in peace and quiet makes no difference at all to the fox. To his way of thinking, all that is necessary is to get rid of the rabbit. And

if one is a fox, that isn't a hard thing to do.

Often a fox den is in the midst of an open field. This may be so that the wary creatures can see on all sides, and spy danger afar off. New England foxes usually have but one or two rooms in their homes. These rooms are dark as pockets. But foxes don't mind that. Their eyes, like a cat's, can see as well in the dark as in the light.

Usually a fox family has more than one den. If they find that one is being watched, they move to another as quickly and quietly as possible. Many a boy and dog have come up, breathless after a long run, to the mouth of a fox den. They have dug deep down, and have found it — *empty!*

Fox cubs look more like round, roly-poly, yellow gray bundles of woolly fur

than anything else. Their tails are so short and stiff it doesn't seem that they will ever grow soft and plummy.

The mother fox takes very good care of her funny babies. She feeds them young mice and rats. They grow larger and larger. They have pert, pointed faces, sharp ears, and bright, cunning eyes full to the brim of mischief.

Some bright day she takes them outdoors to play. They bound about in the sunshine like woolly balls. They frolic about like puppies. They chase their tails. They pounce pell mell-upon each other. They make sudden dives upon their dignified old mother. They pull her tail. They give short, sharp yelps like baby puppies learning to bark. They find an unwary cricket hurrying home to his family, and worry him almost out of his wits. They forget

him when one little cub finds a big, lazy June bug taking a nap. They have moments when they sit quietly and look the field over with wise, round eyes.

There comes a sound — far-off and faint — the bark of Rover, the farm dog, or the shout of Billy as he runs home from school. The mother springs to her feet. She speaks. The fox babies know what she says. Away they scamper, helter-skelter, and tumble one over the other into their den. A moment later and a cluster of black points — which are noses — and a cluster of bright points — which are eyes — are all that can be seen of the little family.

It is said that when a fox has a den near a farmhouse, she never robs the hen-roosts of that particular farm. Instead she goes a long, tiresome journey

to some far-away barn, helps herself to whatever she can find, and brings home many a tempting meal to her babies. While her cubs are small, she will not risk being caught near her home. Both parents will protect their little ones, even to laying down their own lives, if necessary. They will starve rather than take food from their children.

FOOD

Foxes eat all sorts of animal food. Each fox — when he is old enough — hunts by himself. At night he steals out cautiously, creeping carefully along, often going miles in search of just the food he wants. No rabbit, squirrel, field-mouse, rat, or mole is safe when a fox is abroad. He likes fruit, too — especially grapes.

A fox doesn't like to wet his feet. It is said, however, that a very fine crab sometimes so tempts him that he forgets his dislike of water. There is a story of a fox who used to drag his bushy tail back and forth lightly over the water. When a crab put up a foolish claw and grabbed the tail, the fox dragged him quickly to land.

When a fox finds chickens at roost in a tree, he has a strange way of catching them. He runs round and round, round and round, round and round the tree. The chickens watch, lean out, farther—farther—grow dizzy, lose their balance, and, with frightened clucks, fall straight to the ground.

TRAPS

Foxes are such thieves, helping themselves to anything they can lay paws

on, it is no wonder that farmers don't like them and do all they can to catch them.

To catch a fox in a trap, one must take lessons in patience and skill of a fox himself. The trap must not be placed anywhere near the chicken coop — a fox is on guard there. It must be put in the woods or in a field where the fox is known to hunt.

For a week, maybe, before the trap is set the trapper coaxes the fox something like this: He cuts a place in the frozen ground. He digs out three or four inches of earth. He fills this place with ashes or dried leaves or chaff, in which are mixed bits of roasted cheese. For awhile the fox won't touch this tempting meal. But some cold night, he pokes among the ashes and has a delicious lunch of cheese. Nothing happens, so he tries it again and again.

Before the first fall of snow, the trapper hides his trap in the bed of ashes and cheese. But after all his trouble, the chances are that the sly fox will take a sniff or two, shake his head doubtfully, and trot quietly away.

If a fox is caught, he will fool the trapper if he can. Sometimes he plays that he is dead. There he lies — held by one foot in the trap — frozen stiff. The dog comes up and noses him. The trapper pokes and prods him. He is as still as only he knows how to be. The trapper leaves him for a brief moment. There is a flash, the bark of a surprised dog, a flash of red-gold tail far off toward the woods — and the fox is gone.

FOX HUNTING

In some parts of this country, and in others, fine kennels are found where

large packs of hounds are kept just for the purpose of running down foxes.

Some clear, crisp morning the whole pack is turned loose. Soon they are on the track of a fox. Away they go, followed by the hunters with their guns. For miles around the woods resound with the deep, musical baying of the hounds.

About a half-mile ahead of them runs the fox for whom all this chase is made. He is so fleet of foot, so light of heart, so full of bounding life from the tip of his pointed nose to the end of his beautiful tail, that he leads the dogs a rapid chase. Up hill, down hill, on and on and on for miles and miles they go. The fox eludes his hunters at every turn. He bounds across the dry stones in the bed of the brook. He crosses and criss-crosses the field

until his tracks lead in and out and out and in, back and forth over each other. He goes with long, easy strides up the hill. He mounts a high rock. He watches the dogs down below him trying to untwist the tangle of his footprints. He almost smiles. Far off the fox spies a hunter. He comes nearer, gun leveled. The fox is up and away with nervous, nimble leaps toward the woods. He crosses a piece of ploughed ground. He walks coolly along the frozen rut of the high road where a loaded sleigh has just passed. No scent of his rapid feet will stay in frozen ground. He goes through a pasture to walk about in the footprints the cows have left there. The dogs will have hard work tracing him there. Near the woods he finds the fresh tracks of another fox. He walks carefully in

these for awhile. Then he branches off for himself, leaving the dogs to decide when they come up which set of tracks belong to him.

Wild, beautiful, buoyant fellow, fleet as the wind, you have our best wishes for escape, now and always. Elude the hunters as best you may. Keep as long as you can the strong, free, gladsome life God has given you. The "sport" of hunting you to the death is something of which civilized men should be ashamed.

A STORY

It was a cold, moonlit night with the first snow lying white and smooth over the ground. Freddy walked fast, whistling below his breath to show himself that he wasn't afraid. Suddenly he heard a sharp, short bark.

It didn't sound just like a dog's bark. Freddy bent his head to listen. There in the light snow, he saw a track — dozens of tracks, small and sharp. Freddy stopped whistling. They were fox tracks.

Freddy hadn't lived all his life in a little wayback New England village for nothing. He knew that to *see* a fox, even, a boy must use all his caution and cunning, and then probably he won't see him. But it is worth trying for. So Freddy crept to a clump of evergreens some distance from the path. He sat down on a rock to wait and listen. Wary as a fox himself, he peered through the dark boughs. He drew back, scarce believing his eyes. He looked again, caught his breath, and then sat as still as the rock itself to watch.

Just beyond the evergreens was a cleared space. And this is what Freddy saw. One, two, three — six foxes — beautiful, half-grown creatures, with tawny tails flashing in the moonlight. They were well fed. They were out for nothing more nor less than a grand frolic. They flew round and round after their bushy tails. They jumped and capered. They dashed into each other and fought play battles like jolly school boys. They raced and chased and chased and raced in and out of the soft yellow light. One was ruddy red, and one was dark with a thick, soft fur which would make him run for his little life some day.

Suddenly a thought came to Freddy. He had heard somewhere that if one gave a short, sharp squeak like a wood-mouse one could coax a fox to come

close to one. Now there wasn't an animal anywhere around the village that Freddy couldn't mimic. Many a time his mother heard the cat mew piteously and opened the door only to find Freddy outside. All around the house in unlikely places, squirrels chattered, hens clucked, and turkeys gobbled. Crows cawed in the dead of night. Frogs chirped shrilly and "kerchugged" from high snow-banks. The time had now come when Freddy could make some real use of his gift.

He shut his lips tightly. Then he drew in his breath sharply and quickly. "Squeak, squeak, squeak." Surely a wood-mouse spoke!

The fleetest of the foxes paused in his play. He turned his head, listening.

"Squeak," said the little mouse again softly. The fox bounded straight to-

ward the clump of evergreen trees. He paused. Freddy waited. There was no hurry. After a minute the mouse said, "Squeak, squeak," in a voice that trembled ever so slightly.

A few swift graceful leaps — and the fox stood face to face with Freddy on the rock.

Freddy sat motionless — half frightened, scarce daring to breathe. The fox showed no surprise whatever. He stood still, one foot lifted, his plummy tail a graceful curve of light against the snow. His eyes were fixed on Freddy's face, as if he would read the tiniest thoughts way back in his head. Then slowly he turned, and trotted quietly away toward the woods. When he was once out of sight, though, what a change came over him. He jumped about and frolicked and capered. "I

fooled that boy," he thought. "I was frightened half out of my wits. But I didn't let him see it." Then he fell to thinking about that wood-mouse. For, with all his cunning, he had not seen through Freddy's trick. He resolved that the very next night he would go back and find her.

Meanwhile Freddy ran home. "My—ee! Wasn't he great!" said he to himself. Then he barked exactly like a fox. Farmer Brown's turkeys woke, tumbled off their perches, flapped their wings, and cried so piteously that the farmer came out with his gun and his dog, determined "to catch that fox this time, anyway."



Woodchucks.

WOODCHUCKS

A woodchuck is a queer little creature. His body is flabby and heavy. It is covered with coarse, shaggy fur, brown-gray on top and brown-red underneath. His short, thick legs seem made for digging rather than running. His black feet seem too big for the rest of his body. On the underside they are quite bare. His tail is dark and bushy. His neck is so short that it seems a part of his thick-set little body rather than a neck. His head is broad and flat. He has a stupid little face with a wide nose, thick lips, stout whiskers, and funny ears standing up stiff and straight to hear all that is going on in the woodchuck world. Do your best — you can't

make anything very winning out of a woodchuck. He is just a commonplace sort of fellow with the scent of the warm brown earth always clinging to his rough coat.

DENS

Probably the great, great, great grandparents of our woodchucks always lived in the woods. This gave the family its name — *woodchucks*. Nowadays, perhaps, woodchucks find juicy grass and tender leaves more to their tastes than dry bark and twigs. Anyway, they usually live in fields and pastures.

From the outside, about all you can see of a woodchuck's house is a hole in the ground. But this is only the door. Step inside the little home. You will find that, in spite of stupid face and manner, the woodchuck knows

something about building a comfortable home.

Usually he selects a spot on a side hill. He digs with his stout fore feet and his sharp teeth. The loose earth he throws backward under his body. With his hind feet he kicks it out of the way. He makes the door of his house lower than the rooms themselves. When a freshet comes, *he* won't be drowned out of house and home. The door leads into a long, narrow hall which slants up maybe for two or three feet. Then it turns upward sharply and runs perhaps for eight or ten feet parallel to the surface of the ground.

The burrow is sometimes divided into several rooms. Besides the front door on the hillside, there is a back door somewhere. If you were a woodchuck, you would often go to your front door

intending to go to market. You would find just outside — waiting for you to step into it — a trap all carefully set. It is at such times that a back door comes in handy. The woodchuck turns around. He runs the length of his narrow hall. He walks quietly out of his back door.

FOOD

Grass, herbs, roots, and the best of the farmer's ripe fruit and vegetables are the woodchuck's food. * Best of all he likes red clover.

HIBERNATION

The fields grow brown and bare. The delicious red clover is all gone. Woodchucks find themselves so sleepy they forget even to be hungry. So they "hole up." That is, they go into

their burrows for winter. They shut the doors behind them. They creep into the snug inner room. They curl themselves up in tight woolly balls, their noses hidden in their fur. They are soon sound asleep.

YOUNG WOODCHUCKS

In the spring the woodchucks wake up and come out of their holes. They are rough and untidy. They use the only combs they have — their sharp claws — and get the tangles out of their fur. They wash themselves as a cat does.

Then one day to one of the burrows come six baby woodchucks. The rooms are rather small for so large a family. When fall comes, the six babies are as big as their parents. The little underground house can't hold so many. So

the young folks build new homes not far away. Into these they crawl, shut up the doors, curl up, and go to sleep for the winter.

A STORY OF CANDLEMAS DAY

“Sunny morning,” said Uncle John, shaking his head at the blue sky. “Late spring, that means” —

“Why?” asked Nan, looking up from her buckwheat cakes and maple sirup.

“Well,” said Uncle John, smiling, “you see, Nannie, this is the second day of February — Candlemas Day. Now, on this very day, every year, that old woodchuck, who lives in the hole over in the south pasture, wakes up and comes outside to look things over. It is so bright to-day he will see his shadow on the snow. So back he

will go to take another snooze six weeks long. That makes a late spring" —

"Will he, *really*, Uncle John?" asked Nan.

"I never saw him myself," said Uncle John; "but that's what they say. They're great weather prophets — the woodchucks.

"If Candlemas Day is fair and clear
There'll be two winters in the year."

This was Nan's first winter in the country. There were strange things happening every day — but this was the strangest of all.

Nan had caught glimpses of the old woodchuck scurrying in and out of his hole last fall. Really, he looked too stupid to know the day of the month.

"Run out doors and play, dear," said Aunt Margaret, by and by.

Nan went at once. She looked across the broad, snow-covered pasture. If one was light and stepped very carefully and kept very, very close to the fence, one might get across.

Some way or other Nan did it. She stumbled up the hill at the other side of the pasture, where last June the clover had grown red and sweet. Some brown heads stuck up, now. Each wore a winter night-cap of snow. Nan picked one. The woodchuck must be hungry after his long nap. Maybe dried clover would be better than nothing.

Nan found the spot where the woodchuck's hole had been. It was close to a pile of rocks and stones. She sat down to watch. The world was so big and bright and white it was all she could do to keep her eyes open. She

walked about a little while. It wouldn't do to go sleep. The old woodchuck might come at any minute.

Once she heard a rustle somewhere. She ran to the woodchuck hole. All was still there. Then she saw a chickadee peeping at her from some bushes. He must be hungry, Nan thought.

"Guess I'll have to be going," she said to the chickadee. "Uncle'll miss me if I'm not home to dinner." She put the faded clover down close to the woodchuck's door.

Then she went away. Half way home, she turned to look back. Something she saw made her shade her eyes and look again. There, near the woodchuck's house, against the snow, she saw something dark. She waited only to make sure. Then back she ran.

All out of breath, she came to the

hole. There was a flutter of wings as a startled chickadee flew up from the bushes. But there was no red-brown woodchuck anywhere. The little door was closed and locked. Had he gone in again so soon?

Uncle John laughed when she told him. He says the only way Nan can be sure about the woodchuck is to wait and see what kind of a spring there is. For if he *did* come out that day, he couldn't fail to see his shadow. And that will make the spring late. So Nan is waiting anxiously. But down in her heart she is quite sure that he did come out. She has told Uncle John why. When she went back that day to the woodchuck's house *the head of clover was gone from the door!*

RABBITS

The common wood-rabbit is brown — a soft, warm brown, prettily penciled with lines of black. On his sides this brown fades into gray. On the under side of his body the gray becomes pure white. His tail is so short it looks almost as if it had been cropped off. On the top it is the color of his back. Underneath it is soft, downy white. This funny white tail of the wood-rabbit gives him one of his best known names — cottontail. He has a near relative — the hare — whose tail is all black.

SUMMER TIME

The rabbit home is usually built by the mother rabbit. It is in or near the



RABBITS

woods. Sometimes it is a long, narrow burrow in the hillside. Often, Bunny builds what is called a form. She digs up a piece of turf. She lays this one side to use by and by. She scoops out a little hollow in the ground. She lines it with grass and fur which she takes from her own soft breast. Over the little nest, she fits back carefully the piece of turf.

In this little home, by and by, a half dozen or more baby rabbits are born. They are small and weak and helpless. They have no fur. Like kittens, their eyes are shut tight. Ten or twelve days pass before the babies can see. Then what a nice warm home they find themselves in! What a kind, tender little mother they have! Often she leaves them alone for a long time. But she always comes back. She is

careful to go and come unseen. She hides all signs of the little door of the house. Even the father doesn't know where the nest is hidden. For, it is said, should he see his babies before their fur is grown, he would eat them at once.

By and by, in suits of sleek gray fur, mother takes her six bright-eyed babies to see their father. She pokes them about and shows off all their good points. The family is already large. The children next older than these babies aren't yet grown up. But the father seems pleased with his new babies.

FOOD

As is usually the case in large families, the little rabbits soon learn to look after themselves. Food isn't hard to find,

for they eat all sorts of plants and herbs. Like the woodchuck, they are fond of clover. Best of all they like vegetables.

To think of a garden with whole beds of carrots, parsnips, and turnips just makes Bunny's hungry little mouth water.

There is cool, crisp lettuce, too; and delicious cabbage leaves. All day long he thinks about them. At night when the big dog is safely tied up, away goes Bunny to the garden. Such a feast as he has. Long before light his nimble little feet carry him back home. Only the jolly Man-in-the-moon has seen and he won't tell.

Bunny likes bark, too. He picks out a young tree. He stands on his hind feet. He reaches up just as far as he can and nibbles off the tender bark.

Some of it he eats. More of it he leaves on the ground. This gnawing is good for his teeth. It keeps them short and sharp. But it kills the tree.

ENEMIES

Bunny has many enemies. There is the farmer, whose vegetables he eats and whose trees he kills. There are dogs on all sides. But if one keeps close watch one can run away from men and dogs, hiding in the first convenient burrow. If, as happens sometimes, that belongs to a woodchuck or a weazel or a fox, and he happens to be at home, Bunny finds that he has gone from "the frying-pan into the fire." For all these animals, as well as minks and skunks and ferrets, are fond of rabbits. Sometimes, too, a swift rush of wings and a downward swoop

of a hungry hawk or owl sends Bunny trembling with fright into the nearest hiding place.

It is well for the rabbit that nature has made his coat of gray-brown fur. It is so much the color of leaves, and shadows, and soil, and that, unless his white tail gives him away, he is often quite unseen under a big burdock or among the friendly ferns. He has a keen scent, too, far sight, and four fleet, trusty little legs.

WINTER TIME

Bunny's little home among the wild asters and goldenrod is too cold for winter, so he builds another. Rather he sits down in the shelter of some rock and lets the snow build one for him. Thick and fast, thick and fast, come the great white flakes. Bunny is

soon well covered. He gets up and moves gently from side to side so that the snow may not pack too hard nor too close. And in a short time he finds himself inside the snugest and coziest of homes — its walls and roof all of glistening white snow. In the roof is a little hole made by his breath. Through this hole comes plenty of fresh air. Out of it goes a strong, unmistakable rabbit scent. On some frosty morning the dog who hunted him all summer puts up his nose and sniffs the air once or twice. Then off and away he goes, straight toward the little snow-house under the cedars. Don't you hope Bunny will have gone for a run across the snow?

Bunny's footprints of a winter morning tell an interesting story. The two fore prints are about six inches apart. They

are made by the hind feet. The two prints just back of them and close together show the quick, light touch of the short fore paws. The prints are like Bunny himself — nimble, gentle, and timid.

Bunny doesn't mind the deep snow. When it is so deep that it brings him where he can reach the tops of the young maples, he is very happy. Then "Crunch, crunch," go the sharp teeth; and the tops of the maples look as if a boy had been along and cut them off with his jack-knife.

GOOD TIMES

Bunny is often frightened half out of his little skin. He often sees hard times when food is scarce and snow and cold are plenty. But on the whole it is a free, frolicsome, rollick-

some life that he leads — gay as a gypsy's.

To see him at his very best, one must visit him in the heart of some great forest far away from human voice and dog-bark.

The great sun goes down. The woods are full of shadows and moonbeams. "Thump! thump! thump!" What is that? Again it comes — and again — "Thump! thump! thump!"

It is only a little rabbit down there on the edge of the clearing. He has just come from home for the evening play-spell. He leaps high in the air. As he comes down, he strikes the ground sharply with his heavily padded foot, "Thump! thump! thump!" How can such a little foot make such a big noise? Sometimes this sound is a danger signal. When a crowd of rabbits

hear it from one of their number, how they will scatter! Sometimes, it seems that Bunny makes this queer noise out of pure mischief — as if he was trying to frighten you.

To-night it seems to be the signal for beginning the midnight frolic. A number of rabbits are already in the clearing. Every minute there are fresh arrivals. One by one, ears well laid back, feet scarcely seeming to touch the ground; two by two racing along; in social little family groups; still they come.

A dance begins. The rabbits put on comical little airs. They trip to and fro with slow, even steps. Somebody gets angry. He stamps his foot. They all scamper away. Then, after a minute's silence, from under a fern, up pokes an inquisitive little nose. A head follows and two long, brown ears.

Out whizzes a rabbit — two — four — six — a dozen. The clearing is full of them again. Round and round they go in a wild go-as-you-please dance. They get tired of this and play games. One looks like fox and geese. Another is surely leap frog. Two little fellows are going round and round the clearing like race horses — dark eyes shining, white tails flashing in the moonlight. Two others are boxing with quick, deft paws. Hark! far off and faint, someone hears a fox bark. The next instant there isn't a rabbit in sight. Only the nodding ferns and startled shadows show the way they have gone.

STORY

One day Babbie and Fritz were playing in the woods near Babbie's home. Suddenly Fritz pricked up his brown

velvet ears, sniffed once or twice, and was off through the underbrush. Babbie followed as fast as she could. She and Fritz had seen the same thing — a tiny brown rabbit. It looked like the shadow of the burdock leaf under which it sat. But shadows don't have big bright eyes and white tails.

“Catch him, Fritz,” called Babbie. “Catch him, only *don't* hurt him.”

Last Easter mother had told Babbie that over in Germany little boys and girls believe a rabbit lays the dainty colored Easter eggs.

For a whole year now, Babbie had wanted a pet rabbit. If they could only get this one.

But they couldn't. Bunny was too sharp and too spry for them. When Fritz came to a stream of water he lost all track of the hurrying little feet.

Back he came to Babbie; and they went home and told mother all about it.

“Never mind, dear,” said mother. “Just wait till morning. Maybe you’ll find the Easter eggs, if you did lose the rabbit.”

Sure enough, next morning, in a little basket on the table, Babbie found five beautiful Easter eggs — red, blue, yellow, purple, and green. While she tried to decide which was the prettiest, in came father.

“Come with me, Babbie,” he said; “I want to show you something.”

Out in the clearing, father told Babbie to look all around carefully and see what she could find. Babbie looked and looked. All she could see was a little patch of dried grass about as big as father’s two hands.

Babbie took hold of this. Up it

came. Under it was a cozy fur-lined nest. In the nest was the bright-eyed rabbit. And with her — no Easter eggs, but six funny, fuzzy, gray-brown baby rabbits.



MONKEYS

MONKEYS

Perhaps, among all the animals, there isn't another quite so tired and homesick as the little brown monkey who goes about with the hand organ. He wears a faded red coat. A scarlet cap sets jauntily on his head. He runs about as well as he can at the end of a stout chain. He makes a pert bow. He passes his master's hat for pennies. But all the time he looks at the world with weary, wondering eyes. What is he thinking about? Of a lovely sunlit land, maybe, far away across the sea, where he used to live.

In that same lovely land at home in the great forest, you would scarcely

know the little scarlet-capped monkey. There, he is as merry and mischievous as only a monkey knows how to be. All day long, he raced up and down the branches. He screamed, laughed and frolicked. He played all sorts of "monkey tricks" on his mother and brothers and sisters. Once he threw down a big nut to hit the head of a man under the tree. The man scolded. But the monkey only grinned at him and pelted him with more nuts.

One sad day the monkey walked into a trap left for him by a hunter. Then his troubles began. The hunter came and took him out of the trap. He was packed in a box with ever so many more unhappy monkeys and crossed the great ocean. When the box was opened, some of the monkeys were lucky enough to be sold as pets for

little boys and girls. Away they went to warm homes. Others joined a circus. Still others went to the Central Park to live in cages. Our poor little monkey came into the hands of the organ-grinder.

When you are used to the freedom of a great green forest, it isn't easy to spend your time on a chain. It isn't easy to walk about on hind feet when nature meant you to use all fours. It isn't easy to do funny tricks when one's heart aches to be at home. It isn't easy to live in a land of cold winds and winter half the year when one was made to live in a land of sunshine and summer. The monkey shakes and shivers with cold. By and by he begins to cough. He is very miserable. But organ-men have whips for bad monkeys and food for good ones. So the little monkey

wears his scarlet cap and does his best day after day.

THE MONKEY FAMILY

The monkey family is a large one. In it are monkeys of many sizes, shapes, and colors. There are big monkeys, middle-sized monkeys, and little monkeys. Some have funny faces. Some are quite hideous. There are long-nosed monkeys and snub-nosed monkeys. Some have tails longer than their whole bodies. Some have ordinary tails. Others have no tails at all. Some of them are quite bald. Some have hair so long it touches the ground. Some have soft, thick fur. Some have no fur. Some have cheek pockets in which they store away food. Others have none. And as for color — there are monkeys gray, brown, and black. There

are dingy red ones and yellow ones; and some monkeys show beautiful tints of fiery red, bright blue, and warm purple.

All monkeys have feet and hands — or something so like hands that that is what they are called. Most of these hands and feet have five fingers and five toes. Many of them, however, have no real thumbs. Some have nails on fingers and toes. Some have claws instead.

A monkey's foot doesn't seem made so much for walking as for taking hold of things. Often the big toe is quite like a thumb. A monkey's hand isn't much like a boy's. A boy's hand is beautifully made. It shows that the boy himself has a brain which tells the hand what to do. A monkey's hand is nothing at all but a "paw" — and a sly, cunning paw at that.

A monkey's tail is often something more than an ornament. It has been called his fifth hand, because it helps him in climbing and holding fast to things. But it is even more than that. It seems almost to see. Sometimes, a monkey finds a fresh egg safely hidden away in a small niche. His hand won't go in. He whirls around. In a flash in goes his tail. It wriggles about in the cranny and whisks out the treasure to the great delight of the monkey.

APES

Apes are very large monkeys. Among the apes there are chimpanzees, gorillas, and ourang-outangs. When at home they live in great forests of Asia and Africa.

The monkeys which we see in our

cities belong, usually, to the family of spider monkeys.

SPIDER MONKEYS

Swinging about the trees in the South American forests, are hundreds of furry little monkeys with funny copper-colored faces. They seem to be all legs and tails. They look for all the world like big black sprawling spiders. They are called Spider Monkeys. From the tip of his saucy nose to the root of his wonderful tail, a spider monkey isn't more than a foot long. His tail, itself, is two feet long. He uses it in all sorts of ways. It is just the thing to hang by from a high branch, and on the ground, the spider monkey swings it up above his body, curls it into the form of a big S, and uses it as a kind of balance or sail to help him walk.

These monkeys are famous bridge-builders. They travel from one forest to another in large bands. They come to a stream.

They don't like to get wet. Most of them sit down for a good visit while some of the oldest and most traveled monkeys look up the best place to build the bridge.

They pick out a place on the river where the trees on the opposite bank bend toward the water. Then the most powerful of the monkeys climb a tree on their side. They twist their tails firmly around a branch which overhangs the water. They hang heads downward.

Another monkey runs up the tree. He walks over the backs of his companions. He twists his tail tightly about the body of the last one, and hangs

head downward. Up comes another monkey, fastening himself in the same way.

One after another does the same. In this way a long bridge or chain is made with monkeys for links. The last monkey in the chain is always one of the strongest. When he hangs over the farther shore, he pushes the ground with his feet. The whole bridge swings back and forth, higher and higher. The last monkey grabs at a branch. He catches it. He draws himself up into the branches. He takes firm hold. The bridge is built. A signal is given. One after another, the monkeys waiting on the shore, climb the tree and cross the river.

Some of the young folks are so full of life that they play a joke or two on the patient old monkeys who are part

of the bridge and who can't let go long enough to punish the saucy scamps.

After the band of monkeys is over, those who make the bridge must get across. Two or three of the stoutest ones who have crossed go up the tree where the last monkey holds one end of the bridge. They take hold with him. They clamber up the branches as high as the chain will stretch. A second signal is given. The whole line swings to the bank opposite. Some of the lower ones may get ducked. Once over dry land, the lower monkeys drop off one by one. The others catch at the branches of trees. The chain is broken and away goes the whole troop.

STORY

Tabby lay sound asleep in her basket, close to the fire. Taffy crouched near.

Taffy was a yellow-brown monkey. Tabby was a yellow-white cat.

Tabby didn't like Taffy. One day, when he had first come, he had tried to ride on Tabby's back. This was more than any sober old cat could stand. Tabby had never forgotten it. Taffy never had, either, for Tabby had used her claws.

But to-day Taffy was so cold that he was ready to do almost anything to get warm. He crept to the basket. He peeped over the edge. Tabby did look so warm and comfortable. Taffy leaped in. The next instant he cuddled down close beside Tabby. Tabby opened one great green eye and blinked. Then she stretched her paws lazily and began to purr. Taffy was so happy he wished he knew how to purr, too.

After that, Taffy and Tabby were

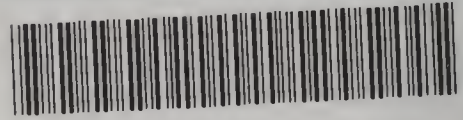
good friends. In the spring Tabby's kitten came. She was so proud that she took it into the parlor to show her mistress and the new baby. Taffy watched — his eyes twinkling.

Next day, while Tabby was out looking up a mouse for dinner, a dreadful thing happened. The kitten fell into the bath tub. Taffy heard the splash and a shrill "Mew! mew!" He flew across the room. He sprang on the edge of the tub. He reached down and caught the struggling kitten in his mouth. He dragged her out. Then, as gently as Tabby herself, he carried the poor, wet, half-drowned creature to the basket. He jumped in. He licked her off as well as he could. His face was full of anxious wrinkles as he worked over her. Then he took her in his arms and rocked her back and

forth, back and forth, just as his mistress did the baby.

When Tabby came back she found the kitten sound asleep in Taffy's arms. She looked puzzled for a minute. Then, as everything seemed to be all right, she curled up and went to sleep. After that she often left her precious baby in Taffy's care.

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